



# LIGHTING THE GREEN LANTERN

Director Martin Campbell and star Ryan Reynolds draw on decades of rich mythology to bring DC Comics' unique superhero to the screen.



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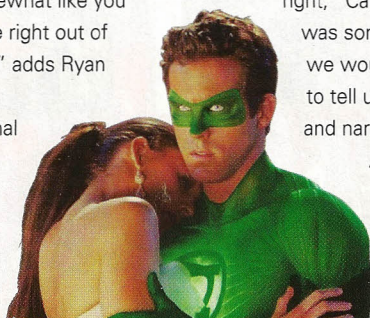
Ryan Reynolds dons the iconic ring and green suit of DC's much-loved Green Lantern in the latest comic book turned blockbuster movie. Playing Hal Jordan, the comic series most popular incarnation of The Green Lantern, Reynolds stars alongside *Gossip Girl*'s Blake Lively and a barely recognisable Peter Sarsgaard.

The film takes its cues from the Green Lantern comics 'Emerald Dawn' and 'Secret Origin', which explore Jordan's induction into the Green Lantern Corps and his early days as the superhero. Director Martin Campbell notes that it's important to serve the original comic book fans when constructing a film with such well-established source material.

"There is a reason they fell in love with this character to begin with. And whatever that reason is, it will be a little more pervasive when you do it in a huge movie like this," he says. "So that was the main priority."

"I kind of see it like a true comic book movie in the sense that it feels somewhat like you ripped scenes from the movie right out of the pages of the comic book," adds Ryan Reynolds.

Staying as true to the original comic books as possible meant consulting decades' worth of established character development and history.



"That was one of the reasons I was so excited about this mythology," Reynolds says. "The history is something like 70 years old. There are so many different worlds and stories you could tell in this universe..."

To ensure that accuracy wasn't flawed, Geoff Johns (DC Comics' writer and creative officer for the Green Lantern comic series) was hired to oversee the production.

"We had the DC Comics people there with us, just checking that we were getting everything right," Campbell says. "And that if there was something we were unsure about, we would go to Geoff... he was there to tell us and keep us on the straight and narrow."

As well as extensive makeup – Peter Sarsgaard's Hector Hammond underwent 4-5 hours of makeup and prosthetics application



before each shoot – the film features incredible visual effects. In fact, the filmmakers had to increase *Green Lantern*'s budget by \$9 million to complete them; namely the intergalactic universe in which the Green Lantern Corps reside and the Green Lantern suit itself, which was entirely CGI.

"In the mythology of the film, the suit is made of pure energy, so there is no actual suit because that would burn," Reynolds explains. "But what I am wearing is a motion capture suit with tracking dots and those sorts of things, so that was a little bizarre... The first time I saw the Green Lantern suit in motion was a real moment for me. It was about six weeks into shooting and they took some footage we shot and basically rendered the suit onto the motion capture outfit that I was wearing. It was just an incredible thing to see."

Blake Lively stepped out of her usual





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role as Serena van der Woodsen on *Gossip Girl* to play Carol Ferris, childhood friend of Jordan. "I had never seen a character like this [in comic book films], where the woman is equal to the man,"

Lively tells of her interest in playing Ferris. "Carol is also a fighter pilot; she runs the company that [Jordan] works for. I thought it was really cool that... she's a bit of a real life hero in her own right. She has the strength and power of the men that surround her."

Director and cast alike note that it's important to point out the fact that Green Lantern is unlike any other superhero, if, at least, because he has the ability to transcend the confines of Earth.

"We go to another planet, we have an intergalactic police force that cover 3,600 sectors and protects the universe. It's a pretty extraordinary kind of scenario, for a superhero," Campbell explains.

"The Green Lantern, in general, I think, is a unique superhero in that the focus isn't that he's super; it's that he is a man," Lively adds. "He is very human and that's his greatest strength, but also his greatest weakness."

"You just look at how we interact when I first meet him as the Green Lantern... I've never seen another comic where it is treated that way. You always think, 'Come on, really? You don't know that's him?' So I appreciated that we acknowledged these things."

Reynolds took a year of working out to build up the physique appropriate for his second-skin like suit. "I had about six months lead time. It was about a year in total, but then, after that, it was a

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good solid month of just watching Sally Jesse Raphael, drinking beer, sitting on the couch."

Of course, Lively's tendency to bring baked treats to the cast didn't help in maintaining the body of a superhero. "It was just a way to sabotage Ryan," she laughs. "I felt like, 'it's not fair!' He was

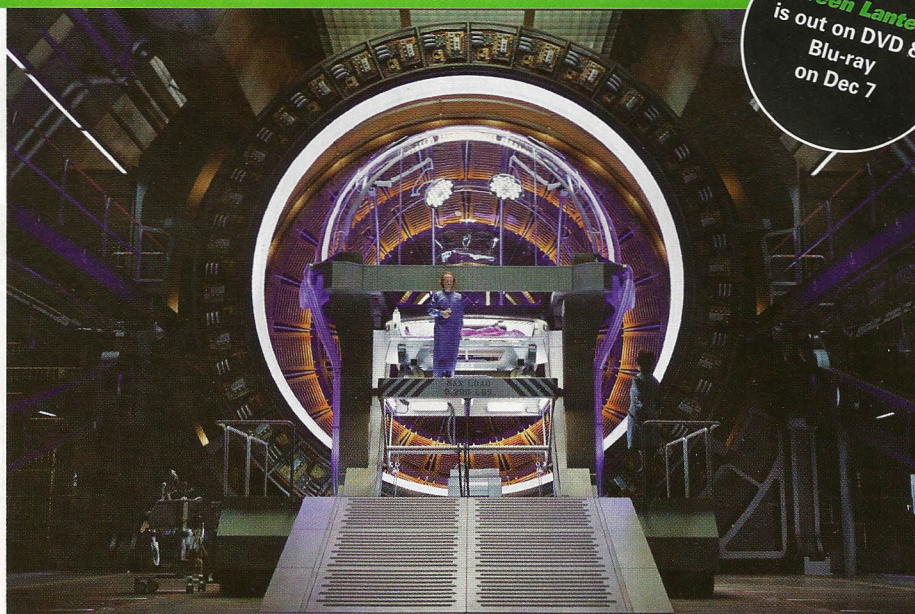
working out as much as he was and I'm the girl, I'm supposed to look better. So, I tried to sabotage him with cupcakes and smiles."

As well as shaping up, Reynolds did gymnastics to prepare himself for the acrobatic stunts required of him.

"It defined the laws of physics that a six-foot-two person should be doing any form of gymnastic whatsoever," he says. "But they had me doing that before production to get ready for the wire work... they would call it being 'aerial aware', so when you are flipping and turning and spinning you know where your body is in relation to the ground."

The comic book hero has become a staple in Hollywood; especially in the last decade. Campbell accredits the boom in superhero films to their ability to transport audiences to a world of escapism.

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**Green Lantern** is out on DVD & Blu-ray on Dec 7